

on some large boulders, of a former period, in the ancient gravel below the shelly loam of Natchez.

At Mount Vernon we landed, and I collected there many fossil shells, of fresh-water and land species, from a terrace of yellow loam, elevated many yards above high-water mark, on the Ohio. Returning from my excursion, I fell in with a naturalist of the place, armed with a rifle, and carrying some wild birds which he had shot. He was a shoemaker by trade, and had a collection of more than 150 well-stuffed birds from the neighborhood. He told me that the notes I heard here in the woods were chiefly those of the red-bird, but that some of the most musical were the song of a brown thrush, called, in Indiana, the mocking bird, but differing from the real musician of that name, which, though abounding at New Madrid, does not range so far north as the Ohio. Conversing with him, I learnt that the loud tapping of the large red-headed woodpecker, so common a sound in the American forests, is not produced, as I had imagined, by the action of the beak perforating the bark or wood, but is merely a succession of sharp blows on the trunk of the tree, after which the bird is seen to listen attentively, to know if there are any insects within. Should they stir in their alarm, and betray the fact of their being "at home," the woodpecker begins immediately to excavate a hole in the rotten timber.

I had promised to pay a visit to Dr. David Dale Owen, the state geologist of Indiana, and hired a carriage which conveyed us to New Harmony, situated on the Wabash River sixty miles above its junction with the Ohio. On our way across the country, we went through a continuous forest, consisting chiefly of oak, beech, and poplar, without any undergrowth, and in this respect differing remarkably from the wooded valleys and hills of the Alleghanies, and the region eastward of those mountains, as well as all parts of New England. Here there were no kalmias or azaleas, or sweet fern, or candleberry, or other evergreens. The green carpet beneath the trees was made up largely of mosses, and among them was that beautiful European species of feather-moss, *Hypnum proliferum*, in great plenty. The trunks of many trees were spotted by a jet-black fungus resem-